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in the close connection between them and the reading matter; often the details of the pictures serve as a subject for discussion. Of course, only a bird's-eye view of French history can be given. Continuity in the recital is maintained to a certain extent by the summaries, which treat of intervening and contemporary history. The résumé at the end of each chapter emphasizes the important features.

If used for conversational purposes, the questionnaires, which were prepared for French children, are too difficult for elementary students, to say nothing of the continual use of the Past Absolute tense, which most teachers prefer to avoid. They might possibly be used in advanced classes to help in the practice of writing, but even this may be questioned. However, the language used in the text is well fitted for conversational use.

The vocabulary, with the possible exception of the proper names, is done carefully and well, following the modern usage in text-making which emphasizes completeness. The question of consistency in the treatment of the proper names, however, may be raised. The English equivalents of such words as *Amérique*, *François*, *Henri*, *Marguerite*, *Philippe-Auguste*, etc., are given, while the equivalents of *Arcole*, *Christophe Colomb*, *Clotilde*, *Hugues*, *Indo-Chine*, *Roncevaux*, *Sainte-Hélène*, etc., are omitted. *Auvergne*, *(Le) Mans*, *Sedan*, are named and located, but *Carcassonne*, *Champagne*, *Lille*, *Poitiers*, *Reims*, and others are omitted. In the matter of verbs, the maker of the vocabulary wisely assumes that the pupil should be familiar with the forms of the regular verbs, and omits such forms in the vocabulary. With equally good judgment, he gives the full forms of the irregular verbs just as they are found in the text.

As a whole, the editing of the text is well done, and this little *Histoire de France* is a valuable addition to our list of beginning texts for colleges and High Schools.

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*Contes du Dimanche* de "l'Écho de Paris." A series of pamphlets, edited by A. Kenngot and Léon Duflos. Modern Language Press, Milwaukee, Wis.

The first story, *Le Premier Avion* (32 pp.) by René Bazin, is not of such high merit as to deserve special treatment. Seldom has a French writer of renown attached his name to anything more insignificant. Here is its substance: The inhabitants of a French town hear the roaring of an approaching enemy aeroplane. Having discovered an old rifle that was hidden in the town-hall, they want to shoot down the avion, but are unable to find a single soul courageous enough to undertake the job. Being

cowards, they are also tyrants: they impose the task on the priest whom they rouse from his bed. Happily for the latter, after half a night spent waiting for the aeroplane to come nearer, it was discovered that the noise did not come from an aeroplane at all but from passing trains. How wonderful!

The story is provided with many "modern improvements": interpretation, in French, of a selected vocabulary, questionnaires, vocabulary exercises and exercises in grammar.

1. The editors want evidently 100% French, not only in class-room but also in home work, since they try to explain in French even the most special words (*genêt*, *rôle*, *grève*, etc.), yet they do not explain a great number of rather hard words (*presbytère*, *entretien*, *craquelé*, *épicerie*). How are the students going to know these if they are not supposed to use a dictionary?

2. The explanations are given in very concise style, bringing in new words, often harder than those which are being explained, accompanied in their turn by new explanations, which, however, do not always render the task of the student easier. Here are a few examples: *Duveté*, *duveteux*, ce qui a beaucoup de duvet (*plume légère qui garnit le dessous du corps des oiseaux*); espèce de coton qui vient sur certains fruits, par exemple: duvet de la pêche. *Tablier*: pièce d'étoffe ou de cuir (*peau tannée de certains animaux dont on fabrique des souliers, des gants, etc.*) qu'on met devant soi pour préserver ses vêtements.

Would it not be better pedagogy simply to translate such words? On the other hand, the usefulness of such explanations is proportionate to their simplicity. If the formulas used by editors and teachers are not to be different from those given by "Le Petit Larousse Illustré," then why not put that book into the hands of the students? They would then not be given such inaccurate statements as: *fleuve*, grande rivière; *forge*, grand bloc de fer; la corne de la lune, le croissant de la lune; notifiant l'arrêt, faisant croire que sa décision était prise dès le commencement; nor such things as: *perdrix*, oiseau de chasse; *rôle*, oiseau à *jambes* longues.

3. If a ready made questionnaire is justifiable at all, the questions should be put in colloquial language, designed to bring forth colloquial answers. The editors evidently do not agree with this. The numerous questions of the booklet have no resemblance to what a conversational sentence should be, and often call for answers that cannot be given without the student's memorizing the text. For instance: à quoi l'auteur compare-t-il l'effet de cette poussée? The answer cannot be other than: l'auteur compare l'effet de cette poussée à ce qui arrive le long des fleuves côtiers, sur les grèves de sable et de vase craquelée, lorsque le flot, à l'embouchure, est tout à coup barré par la marée montante. Anything less than this would make the answer incomplete.

And then, ought not the students to have the questions put to them in the most perfect French possible? The following examples show that the editors have not attached to this the importance it deserves: *Le curé paraît-il plutôt enthousiaste ou plutôt résigné? D'après quel choix étaient-ils groupés?* (The text has: *Tous, groupés selon l'âge.*) *Où pensait-on que l'avion se dirigeât?* etc.

4. In the vocabulary exercises the editors simply write a series of words and ask the student to find synonyms or antonyms for them, without thinking that he has often no means of finding them and that some of them have none. What, for example, are the synonyms of *au-delà*, *surprendre*, *la corne*, *tout son monde*, *le voisinage*, etc.? They must have equivalents, but certainly not synonyms.

5. A new feature among the exercises is answers to questions that are to be formed by students: *Non, Monsieur, ce n'était pas le plus faible, tout au contraire, c'était le plus fort des hommes de Puyberne; non, Monsieur, en réalité il n'en avait pas l'habitude du tout*, etc. But perhaps this device will please some teachers who like novelties.

6. Some of the grammar exercises are very good, but they are swamped in a mass of others of doubtful utility, and lack system in presentation.

It is to be hoped that in the forthcoming issues the editors will select the texts more critically and will exercise better judgment in the preparation of the explanatory material.

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*Nouveau Cours Français.* By ANDRÉ C. FONTAINE. Ginn and Co. Revised Edition. 1919.

This widely known work is greatly improved by a thorough revision. It has been expanded from 272 pages to 349. The chief fault of the original edition was too great condensation, which has been remedied by the introduction of a great many exercises of varied kinds, by a more extended presentation of the grammar material and by enlarging the vocabularies. Other new features are the addition of the phonetic symbols, an excellent choice of six memory passages and a reference list of verbs followed by *de*, *à*, or the direct infinitive. The book has eleven illustrations, a double page map of France, and a double page plan of Paris.

The originality of the first edition is retained, for the book stands apart from the general run of such works by reason of a certain Gallic flavor which gives it great vividness and interest. It is not, first of all, a grammar but is designed as a general utility book, giving as it does grammar and texts to be used as the basis